



ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
[www.islandcountymrc.org](http://www.islandcountymrc.org)

c/o WSU Extension, Island County  
PO Box 5000  
Coupeville, WA 98239

February 8, 2008

Kyle Murphy, Reserve Program Manager  
Washington State Department of Natural Resources - Aquatic Resources  
1111 Washington St. SE  
PO Box 47027  
Olympia, WA 98504-7027

Dear Mr. Murphy,

Island County Marine Resources Committee (MRC) shares your concern about our vital marine resources. We are following with interest the proposal to create a Smith and Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve, having read the proposal, received a briefing on it and discussed its merits as we understand them at this time.

We support the DNR aquatic reserve program and the overall mission of People for the Puget Sound. We also support the concept of an aquatic reserve that would protect the important aquatic ecosystems of Smith and Minor Islands. We understand DNR is beginning a nomination process for additional aquatic reserves and that one will be nominated for Smith and Minor Islands in the near future.

Based on what we know at this time we support the goal of an aquatic reserve for Smith and Minor Islands but do not believe the current proposal addresses the reserve in enough detail enough to allow us to endorse it specifically. Some areas that need further development include the boundary delineation and data behind it as well as the connection to Whidbey Island and related justification. We also believe it is crucial that at least one individual or organization from Whidbey Island become involved in the proposal's development to improve the prospects for local support when the reserve is nominated and contribute to its specific protection features.

We believe these islands are vital resources. We also believe we will get only one chance with the local community to make a good impression and earn their support for the proposal. Finally, we believe that once the suggested development is completed the proposal will have local support and be ready for program review by DNR.

Sincerely,

Dick Toft  
Chair,  
Island County Marine Resource Committee